Penalty on airlines on cancellation of flights

3412. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to impose heavy penalities on any domestic or international airlines who cancel their scheduled flights without proper intimation except bad climate;

(b) if so, by when it will be started; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There is presently no proposal to impose heavy penalties on any domestic or international airlines in the event of cancellation of flights. The present international air law as established by Warsaw Convention and Montreal Convention, 1999 envisage only a measure of facilitation and do not contemplate any punitive action against airlines in case of cancellation/postponement of flights. Most airlines in India already have procedures in place for providing standard passenger facilitation measures in the event of delay/postponement of flights and do everything within their means to ensure that stranded passengers are not inconvenienced. Besides, because of the very nature of the air transportation industry, safety considerations have to be given foremost priority and reasons for delay of the flights are often beyond the control of the airlines. Any punitive provision may also end up increasing the cost of air travel considerably as airlines may be compelled to pass on a part of the financial burden to the passengers.

Operation of small airstrips

3413. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to enhance and make small airstrips operational in various parts of the country for flying of small passenger and cargo planes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how many districts will get benefit by air connectivity in the country; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) is in constant endeavour to operate and upgrade the airports depending upon the requirements of airlines and traffic.

(b) AAI has undertaken the development of Mysore airport in Karnataka and Cooch Behar airport in West Bengal for operation of ATR 42 type of aircraft based on the demand received from Air Deccan and Alliance Air for operation of ATR-42 aircraft.

(c) Does not arise.

Extension of airstrips in Uttaranchal

†3414. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CIVILAVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Uttaranchal has sent any proposal to his Ministry for extension of airstrips and to make them operational for regular air services apart from Dehradun Air Strip; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposals sent and whether Airports Authority of India is going to take over the development work of some of Airports of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State Government of • Uttaranchal had sent a proposal to examine the suitability of State Government airstrips at Gauchar, Chinayalisour and Pithoragarh for operation of regular flights. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has carried out the inspection of all these airstrips and have not found the available infrastructure at these airstrips adequate for introduction of civil flights. Inspection Report indicating deficiencies at these airstrips has been sent to the State Government for remedial actions. At present, AAI has no proposal to take over the development works of some of the airports in the State of Uttaranchal.

Refresher courses for Helicopter Pilots

3415. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in U.S.A., refresher and training courses are compulsory for the Pilots and if so, the details thereof;

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†Ortginal notice of the question was received in Hindi.